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Seeking Challenge in the Career
S. Gayle Baugh, University of West Florida; Sherry E. Sullivan, Bowling Green State University


The Research in Careers series is designed in five volumes to provide scholars a unique forum to examine careers issues in today’s changing, global workplace. What makes this series unique is that the volumes are connected by the use of Mainiero and Sullivan’s (2006) Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM) as the organizing framework and the theme underlying the volumes.

In Volume 4 of the Research in Careers series, the authors explore the influence of challenge on career development and career outcomes. The contributors investigate career challenge in different national contexts (e.g., India) and in different career fields (e.g., entrepreneurship, nursing) and for different groups (nurses, Millennials). The outcomes studied include career satisfaction, leadership skills, and occupational expertise. Finally, negative effects of challenge are suggested.

CONTENTS:

Striving for Balance
S. Gayle Baugh, University of West Florida; Sherry E. Sullivan, Bowling Green State University


The Research in Careers series is designed in five volumes to provide scholars a unique forum to examine careers issues in today’s changing, global workplace. What makes this series unique is that the volumes are connected by the use of Mainiero and Sullivan’s (2006) Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM) as the organizing framework and the theme underlying the volumes. In this volume, Striving for Balance, we consider how individuals seek a healthy alignment between work and nonwork. In addition to building upon the established literature on work/family conflict, the chapters in this volume also examine the reciprocal positive influences between work and nonwork, considering such issues as balancing work with commitments to others, including spouse/partner, children, elderly relatives, friends, and the community.

Chapters 1 and 2 of this volume focus on macro-issues surrounding work/nonwork balance, specifically studying the effectiveness of organizational policies. In Chapter 1, Westring, Kossek, Pichler and Ryan explore if there is a gap between an organization’s adoption of work/nonwork policies and its offering of a supportive environment for the employees’ use of such policies. In Chapter 2, Purohit, Simmers, Sullivan and Baugh draw from social exchange theory and the compensation literature to examine how employees’ satisfaction with their organization’s discretionary (i.e., not legally required) support initiatives influences their work-related attitudes and personal well-being.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine balance from a micro perspective, focusing on generational differences in balance as well as how individuals’ reactions to work-nonwork conflicts influence career outcomes. In Chapter 3, Stawiski, Gentry and Baranik study balance using the lens of generational differences, exploring the relationship between work-life balance and promotability for members of the Baby Boom generation and Gen X. In Chapter 4, Boyd, Keeney, Sinha and Ryan discuss
their qualitative analysis of how 1,359 university alumni’s reactions to work-life conflict events shaped their career choices, including entry, participation, and attrition decisions. Their approach offers a different lens to examine work-life conflict.

Chapters 5 and 6 provide two perspectives on where scholars should focus their future research efforts in studying work/nonwork balance. In Chapter 5, van Emmerik, Bakker, Westman and Peeters provide a conceptual examination of the processes that affect work-family conflict, family-work conflict, and the overall resulting work/nonwork balance or imbalance. In Chapter 6, Bataille offers a multi-dimensional definition of work-family balance and develops a framework, which recognizes the dominant dimensions of work-family balance.


Searching for Authenticity

S. Gayle Baugh, University of West Florida; Sherry E. Sullivan, Bowling Green State University


Volume 2 of the Research in Careers series focuses on the search for authenticity in one’s career. Although there has been growing interest in the topic within the popular press, relatively little academic research has been completed on authenticity and careers. Researchers are still refining the concept of authenticity and are just beginning to investigate how it influences the enactment of careers in today’s turbulent career landscape. This volume offers the first organized effort on the topic.

This volume contains seven chapters which examine the search for authenticity derived from the Kaleidoscope Career Model (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006). Chapters 1 and 2 present a review of the literature and an in-depth analysis of the construct of authenticity. Chapter 1 offers a new lens to view career authenticity based on two dimensions of self-awareness and adaptability. Chapter 2 uses two case studies to define how individuals are authentic in their career. Chapters 3 and 4 examine the authenticity of individuals in different career stages, with Chapter 3 examining recent college graduates and Chapter 4 examining mid to late stage careeers. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 focus on the interplay between social interactions and career authenticity. Chapter 5 offers a process model that traces how, through negotiation, a person’s identities shape and are shaped by relationships with others, leading to the enactment of an authentic career. Chapter 6 explores how individuals remain authentic in their career while negotiating the conflicting expectations of multiple interest groups. Chapter 7 examines the complex relationships among career authenticity, political behaviors, and strain.

The first volume of the series, Maintaining Focus, Energy, and Options Over the Career, examines how individuals enact and keep their career vital over their work life. Award-winning, internationally renowned researchers, including Daniel Feldman, Jennifer Deal, Phyllis Tharenou, and Terry Beehr examine the dynamic nature of contemporary careers and how careers change as individuals change in response to such factors as aging, learning, experience or contextual changes. Volume 1 includes theoretical perspectives on maintaining person-environment “fit” over the course of the career, the shifting constellation of developmental relationships over time and place, a new framework for examining midcareer renewal, a reconceptualization of the retirement transition, and potential gender differences in self-initiated international careers. Empirical studies in volume 1 examine provocative questions including: Is the traditional career really dead? Are there significant generational differences in learning and development? Can career plateauing be positive for the individual or the organization? The focus throughout this volume is on how careers unfold over time and how individuals remain productive and successful as they navigate career changes.

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